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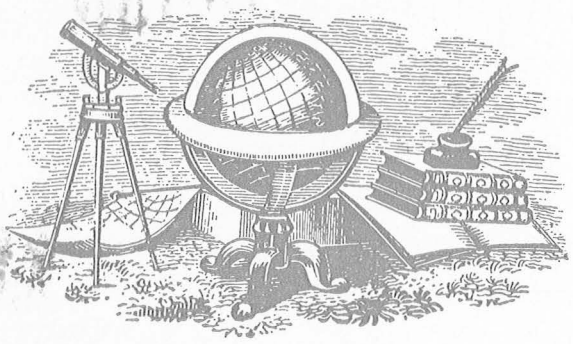

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DEDICATED

to the Memory of our Martyred President

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

May 29, 1917—November 22, 1963

Advocate of Peace, Justice, Tolerance

and the Brotherhood of Man

HISTORY AND RELIGION*

There are never any absolutely new beginnings in history. Insofar as they are radically new, the historian, particularly the devout historian who is dealing with profound meanings, will look for an earlier beginning in order to place the crucial event in a larger setting. All historical actions take place against the background of an inexorable forward movement from past to future. This flux of temporal events is a mystery beyond and behind the mystery and the meaning of history. "Stage" and background are only partially adequate symbols for depicting the relation of time to history. For time is both the stage and the stuff of history. This is the claim made by Reinhold Niebuhr in his book, *Faith and History*.

Religion is probably as ancient as the first man. The time of the response of pre-historic man to his impulse to respond to a power outside of himself is beyond our knowledge. If, therefore, we assume that religion, defined as a response to an outside power, is as old as man himself, we must also assume that it has taken many forms throughout history. Never has there been one universal faith held by all men in any period. In order to illustrate how history and religion are related, I propose to briefly discuss two historic religions, Judaism and Christianity. Needless to say, many other religions were and are in existence at the same time as the two I have chosen. However, Judaism and Christianity are grounded in the conviction that God is active in history, as opposed to religions which are grounded in philosophical ideas.

First let us look at Judaism. The Old Testament, which covers time from approximately 2000 B.C. to 1 B.C., seeks to comprehend the history of a particular people. As Niebuhr also states in *Faith and History*, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, on some levels of their history, is simply their champion against competitors and foes. He both allows and enjoins the Jews to the most ruthless actions in order to encompass the defeat of the foe and to establish their own security. The radically new dimension in this story is that the God of this people is conceived, seemingly at the very beginning, as the God who singled them out for a special destiny. God's covenant with Israel gives meaning to their history and singles them out for a special mission by a special act of divine grace.

Now let us look at Christianity. Niebuhr points out that the New Testament makes the startling claim that in Christ a break in history has occurred. In Christ, history has achieved both its end and a new beginning. The claim that Christ, as God incarnate, is the end of history signifies that in His life, death, and resurrection the meaning of man's existence is fulfilled. Greek philosophy, Roman law, Oriental theory, to say nothing of the ancient Jewish hopes—all affect our historical understanding of Christianity. Indeed, in

*The author, Miss Kathleen Shannon, Associate Professor of Bible and Religious Education, has been at the University of the Pacific since 1955. She was engaged in psychological research for six years at the Character Research Project in Schenectady, New York. Prior to that she was National Director of Children and Youth for the Disciples of Christ.

the 20th century the three major divisions of the Christian faith reflect the historic traditions which are peculiar to each. The Christian faith has been interpreted by each generation that has sought to understand and perpetuate it. We might even say that men of a certain century have tended to make the Christian faith over in their own image. Culture and religion have always interacted.

You might ask, is not history the record of God's revelation? To this I would give an affirmative answer. Christianity affirms that revelation is the self-communication of God. But, revelation takes place in human experience and in events which occur in history. As Craig in *Beginnings of Christianity* asserts, revelation is always humanly received. Even though it is God who acts and speaks in history, the word is received through human ears and understanding. Man responds as an individual to God's acts. Free will is involved. Scholars recognize that the Gospel came in and through historical circumstances, and our New Testament reflects the events of the first and second century A.D. Our religious present is inseparable from our religious past. Religion always reflects and is acted upon in a genuine historical life situation. Thus Christianity throughout twenty centuries reflects an historical dimension of the encounter with God.

As Craig points out, the objective historian finds the treatment of the New Testament difficult, because these twenty-seven books contain interpreted history. However, it is not the historian's task to be a missionary for any religious faith. The historian feels that he should treat the beginnings of one religion as impartially as he does the beginnings of another.

A scientific prerequisite for the understanding of any religion, therefore, is the history of the period, the geography of the part of the world involved, and the cultural and religious heritage of the time. Each writer in the New Testament wrote with the needs of a definite group of people in the first and second century in mind. Only as we look through the eyes of the first and second century Christian are we able to discern what the authors were trying to say in the New Testament.

Religion and history are inextricably bound together. Religion grows as a response to a person or idea. Christianity grew as a response to a Person who was to men of faith the Messiah. Christianity is an historical religion and in its practice has acquired many things from many men of many lands since the earthly ministry of Jesus. Indeed, the roots of the story of historical Christianity began hundreds of years before Jesus, with the Hebrew tribe's emergence from a nomadic to agricultural society.

The Christian church has always had to struggle for its identity within the culture in which it found itself. One has only to recall the influence of Hellenism on Judaism and Christianity to understand this. Historically, however, the Christian church has rarely spoken with a united voice when it attempted to identify its nature, its purposes, and to rethink its practices at any given time. The times in which the church has been forced to search for its identity have been times when the church has been most vital. When there was no

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JULIET WELLS BRIER, HEROINE OF DEATH VALLEY

By GRACE LEADINGHAM*

CHAPTER I

Juliet Wells Brier became famous during her lifetime. This was a matter of some astonishment to her. Out of a near century of existence, an interval of a mere six weeks supplied the basis for her renown, and, during this six-week period, the heroine of Death Valley legend spent no more than five days within the valley's actual confines. Her companions in a hazardous quest found in her a courage, faith, and endurance which provided a touchstone for their own valor, and as the exploits of these first Death Valley pioneers became a part of the gold rush saga, her qualities and her influence fell into perspective.

At the time of the Death Valley ordeal, Juliet Brier was thirty-five years old. She was small, not much over five feet in height, and, according to what in later years she told her grandson's wife, she weighed then and throughout her life, little more than a hundred pounds. Her hair was reddish brown and her eyes brown-hazel.

Her family consisted of her husband, the Rev. James Welsh Brier, and her three sons: Christopher Columbus, John Wells, and Kirke White. James Brier, like his wife, was thirty-five years old. The three children were respectively eight, six, and four.

On November 25, 1849, at the edge of a sheet of slime,[1] a train of frightened, perplexed people split into groups, each seeking in its own way to escape the death which confronted them. The Arcanes, the Wades, the Bennetts and their companions, William Lewis Manly and John Rogers, with perhaps a dozen others turned south. The Jayhawkers, the Mississippi Boys, the Georgians and a lone family, the Briers, set out on more westerly routes, veering as their several judgments dictated.

John Brier says, "The Towns, Wards, Mastersons, Briers and others, bound by congenial ties, bent their courses a little to the north . . ." Before many days had passed, they found themselves struggling through the rock and heavy sand of Fortymile Canyon, their difficulties compounded by two days of snowfall. Eventually, they were forced to abandon their wagons. John Brier was never to forget the occasion. More than half a century later he wrote:

> [I remember] "the drifting sand, the cold blast from the north, the wind-beaten hill, my lesson in the Testament, the burning of the wagons as fuel, the forsaking of nearly every treasured thing, the packing of the oxen, the melancholy departure."

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He also tells of the crossing of the Amargosa Desert:

"The evening of the arrival at the dry wash of the Amargosa River marked the second day of forced abstinence from water . . . Far in the rear, the lonely family trudged, the oxen moaning and the children crying for drink. When the campfires began to gleam at the foot of the Funeral Mountains, two good Samaritans met the laggards with canteens full of water dipped from a turbid pool."

Another long day of travel brought the Briers to the summit of a pass where they made a dry, fireless camp. The only sign of life was a hollow reed "mottled with red and pale blue" which rustled in the north wind. From this camp, Juliet was to set forth unwittingly on her path to fame.

The next morning brought new hope. James Brier came back from his reconnoitering to report what seemed an oasis. It was a spot of green on the brink of the great depression which lay between the travelers and a lofty snow-capped mountain range. In the clear air, the oasis seemed no more than six or seven miles away, but throughout the whole day and far into the night the family strove to reach it down the twists and turns of the long, narrow canyon now known as Furnace Creek Wash. The story is best told in Juliet's words:[2]

On the twenty-fourth of December, 1849, we left a dry camp very early in the morning, hoping to find water not far away . . . We were on foot . . . The train stretched along so that the foremost division was a long way from the last. Night came and no water all day long. I had walked in silence, not in sight or hearing of a soul except my little ones. There was no moon and the stars shone faintly. My little four year old boy gave out and said Oh! Mama! could you carry me a little. Taking him on my back, I carried him till my breath almost left me. Setting him down he says Now I can walk. I took his hand and went on for a minute or two Then again he says Oh! I am tired I can't walk and again time after time I carried him. The ground was hard, composed of small pieces of broken rock and the feet of the oxen made but little impression and I sometimes was obliged to get down and hunt for the tracks. Hapily [*sic*], this state of affairs did not last all night. Coming around a point of a high rock, a fire was burning, and Mr. Brier was sitting by it. I said Is this the camp? He answered no. They have found water six miles ahead. Now I will take Kirk on my back and hasten on leav[ing the] oxen to you and the boys. He did so and I was greatly relieved. What time it was then I had no idea but when we reached the camp it was 3 o'clock A.M. Christmas morning. I was for lying down immediately but good, kind Mr. Masterson insisted upon our eating a little and gave each of us a piece of bread."

The wanderers had indeed found an oasis. Beneath sheltering rock walls, hot and cold springs[3] bubbled amid green willows. The begrimed travelers luxuriated in the opportunity of shedding the dust of their desert journey. Relaxed, they celebrated Christmas with a feast of fresh ox-meat, coffee, and a little ration of bread. Says Juliet:

One company was from the southern states called the Mississippi Boys. These called Mr. B., *Parson.* Toward evening one came to him and says Parson we would like to have you give a lecture this evening.[4] He complied and gave them one on Education telling them what he thought would come to pass at no very distant day . . . All cheered him and we retired almost believing that our greatest trials were past and we were not far from the land of promise but how soon we were undeceived.

During Christmas Day some of the young men had explored the opening into the great valley. They reported they had found a mummy-like old Indian, alive, but almost buried in the sand, and, more importantly, the Jayhawker wheel tracks.

That night one of the Mississippi Boys suggested to Juliet that she and the children remain at the oasis until they could be sent for.

"I have never been a hindrance," she answered, "and neither have my children and every step I take will be toward California."

On the next day, after plowing ankle-deep through the salt marsh at the edge of the oasis, the company followed the wagon tracks to a barren camp[5] at the edge of a salt creek. Here the Jayhawkers were burning their wagons and drying ox-meat in preparation for a grim final effort.

No exact sequence can be established for the various events mentioned as occurring at this camp. Apparently, the Briers were already there when Manly arrived on the evening of December 27. It was probably toward the end of the next day that two men from the Bennett wagons put in an appearance. Their names were Gould and Fish. (Manly, who left the Jayhawker camp before dawn on December 28 to return to the Bennett party, speaks of meeting them about noon as they plodded along the trail from Furnace Creek Wash to Salt Creek.) All but five of the Mississippi Boys, the Briers' companions, decided to "pack their backs" and strike directly west. And the Georgians, who seem to have entered the valley by some roundabout route, now overtook their former comrades. They remained over the night of December 28, and then, having given their oxen to the Briers, shouldered packs and "went up higher and higher until they disappeared."

It was now necessary for the remaining emigrants to find a pass through the mountain wall to the west.[6] They could not know that they were entering upon the hardest part of their journey, but they must have been all too well aware of the immediate difficulties. They had to make their way across twenty miles of sand dunes. A chill wind whipped stinging particles into their faces. Hunger and thirst underscored cold and fatigue. No stop was possible until some sort of camp ground could be reached at the nearest source of water—the snowline. As they mounted to higher levels, dark boulders obstructed the way. Juliet says that when the company finally halted, James brought his family a load of frozen snow stuffed into an old shirt. John Brier speaks of the beauty of the violet sky and the many stars, but ends by saying, "The wanderers thought only of the morrow."

The next morning the Briers passed over a belt of snow which the cattle lingered to eat, and came into a dark, rocky, winding pass down which they traveled all day. John Brier mentions the sunset panorama of glowing peaks which smote them as they made a sudden turn. Not until midnight could they rest at the head of the Panamint Valley.

The several units of the party seem to have made their way down the valley by various routes, now meeting, now parting. Juliet says, "Sometimes we

went south and again north, not knowing whether we should get out of that death-hole of sand and salt." Eventually they came into a trail which led south to a thicket of mesquite bushes. Here were rectangular huts of woven willows near a spring with a banked pool. The settlement was deserted save for an old squaw who scolded unintelligibly at the intruders. Amongst the baskets and pots were horse bones and horsehair ropes, and, until scouts returned with reports of further dreary prospects, the travelers briefly hoped that they were approaching civilization.

At the next camp, a few miles down the valley, the five remaining Mississippi Boys decided to strike westward, their provisions on their backs. It is possible to read between the lines that this decision was a blow to the rest of the company since the entire supply of flour belonged to the five. Also, it may be surmised that the men themselves felt a certain sense of guilt—"Masterson left us in tears, saying it was the hardest thing he had ever had to do."

James Brier says that Juliet stayed up till midnight baking the flour into biscuits for the men to take on their journey. Accounts differ somewhat, but a scene forms itself in the mind: The small woman moving about the campfire, the circle of wistful, watchful faces, the hopeful boy who brings wood. Finally, Asa Haynes, the middle-aged patriarch of the group, holds out a gold-piece. He is refused a roll. The boy goes disappointedly to his bed. Juliet finishes her task by making tiny rolls of remnants of dough given her—an insubstantial safeguard against even direr straits.

The next morning the Jayhawkers left, aiming at a pass in the mountains now called the Slate Range. The Briers lingered to assist the departing Mississippi Boys. James Brier describes the farewell: "When ready, they turned their faces away and reached out their hands."

The decision of the Mississippi Boys to throw off all encumbrances and seek the shortest route west was hardly cause for wonder. The hardships of the journey were now taking a heavy toll. "There was not a vigorous man among us," says John Brier. Juliet had reason to worry about her husband's health, increasingly undermined by a debilitating ailment. To reach the goal before strength failed and life itself ebbed—that was the problem.

After the farewell to the Mississippi Boys, the family trudged onward and at sunset overtook "a part of the Jayhawkers and other stragglers who were waiting for us."

All camped together that night and in the morning followed the pathfinding James into a canyon which gave promise of a passage through the range. The sand at the entrance was damp and covered with ominous footprints. Farther on, it became parched and burning. Within two or three miles, the ravine narrowed to a mere twenty feet and ended in a vast slide of sand. Not far from this, James Brier had discovered a tiny seep of water, but even scoopd out, the little spring yielded only enough water for a ration of coffee at the evening meal. Juliet speaks of the moaning of the tormented cattle.

Throughout all this long day, she had suffered from one of her sick headaches.

The next morning brought confusion. Half the oxen had made their way past their sleeping owners and had returned to the mouth of the canyon. "Father" Fish, who had been weakening for some time, now declared that he could go no farther. Juliet made coffee for him, his own precious potful having spilled. One of the young men was detailed to aid him; another went to round up the oxen. The remaining members of the party began the toilsome ascent of the sandslide. At noon they reached the top and began the still more difficult descent, following "the track of a water spout, the most devious, precipitous and dangerous trail imaginable." The oxen could barely squeeze between the boulders and had to be forced into taking the perilous jumps. A man named Isham dropped out of the ranks to rest. Hunger, and more particularly thirst, aggravated the distress of the day. Hence, when an expansive, sunset-tinted lake[7] came into view, the pilgrims were all too ready to believe that their troubles were nearing an end. The lake, apparently, was only a few miles distant, but night fell while they were still struggling across the plain toward campfires that began to dot the darkness.

It was midnight before they reached the Jayhawkers' bivouac. The water from the lake, so the newcomers were told, was wine-red with minerals and absolutely undrinkable. No other source had been found in the area. Nevertheless, the Jayhawkers shared some of the small quantity of water carried over the mountains.

In the morning, another effort was made to find a spring, but one by one, the searchers returned unsuccessful. Death for all was an immediate prospect. Juliet left her companions, who were "manfully trying to conceal their distress," and knelt in prayer behind a great rock. She returned to the party to declare her certainty that all would be well. According to her son, she "upbraided" the men for their lack of faith. Even as she spoke, one of the Jayhawkers rushed into the circle, crying that he had found water.

It was now possible to undertake a search for the two men who had not appeared in camp. Isham's body was found at the end of a strange track—the print of his hands and knees in the sand. He had crawled four miles toward the Jayhawker camp-fires before dying. Fish's corpse lay farther back, near the top of the sand-slide. By clinging to the tail of an ox, he had managed to surmount the slope. There the other men, his own aide and the herdsman of the stray oxen, had gone on, so overwrought, according to James Brier, that they forgot to give him his blankets.

At the newly-discovered spring—"Providence Spring," the Jayhawkers called it—two young men came into the camp in a starving condition. The Briers accepted them as messmates, offering to share with them the wretched beef which was their only food. Lummis St. John and Patrick helped Juliet drive the oxen when James was scouting ahead and in all ways seem to have been faithful comrades throughout the remainder of the journey.

After two days at the spring, the Briers and their protégés set forth. Trail-

ing behind the Jayhawkers, they made their way through the Argus Range. It was during this passage that Juliet was for once (in John's words) "nearly distracted." Columbus, the eldest son, disappeared. Only after his mother had endured agonies of apprehension, did the unconcerned boy emerge from a side canyon, whistling as he drove his oxen.

Next came the twenty-five mile crossing of Indian Wells Valley. James was increasingly weak. At Indian Wells,[8] the family rested two days and then rejoined a unit of the Jayhawkers.

On leaving the oasis, the party struck Walker's trail.[9] However, John Brier mentions "deviating courses which greatly increased the distance." In after years, James Brier spoke of two waterless days when tongues were swollen and protruding and food could not be swallowed. Several Jayhawker accounts cite the surreptitious looks which were cast about the company as in each mind rose the query, "Who will be next?" Also described are the dreams of cool water and bountiful repasts from which the dreamers awakened to the shock of their famished state.

In a reminiscent Jayhawker letter is found this passage:

> I can see in my mind's eye that little party trudging along through that weary desert so poor and weak they are scarcely able to throw one foot in front of the other, but still trudge . . . Methinks I see us now camped there in the sand miles from water dividing up the old ox that died that evening burning off the hair and crisping the hide so that we could eat it and preparing some tripe by well shaking and laying on the coals of a sagebrush fire.

In his letter for the Jayhawker reunion of 1876, James Brier writes: "The lady who used to tighten the girths of our oxen is still alive."[10] But Juliet contributed more than physical aid. "Boys, it's always darkest just before the day!" Apparently, Juliet thus exhorted her comrades. Their tribute to her sustaining faith appears in the *Jayhawker Papers:* a repeated quoting of her words. It was in this most desperate period when the men were touching the limits of their endurance, that the mysterious strength of the small, frail woman was most clearly manifested.

The evidence provided by the contemporaneous diary of Sheldon Young justifies the estimate that the Briers were on the Mojave Desert for about two weeks. It should always be remembered, however, that the various units of the party proceeded at their own pace.

At the camp on the western edge of the desert, gloom and foreboding still prevailed. These emotions were intensified by the death of the Jayhawker, William Robinson. Juliet's recollection of the event is this:

> When near the place where Mojave is now, Robinson said to me, "Mrs. Brier, I have a presentiment I shall never reach California."
>
> "Oh, yes, you will!" I said to cheer him. The next day he fell off his pony and died. The men dug a shallow grave with their knives and laid him to rest.

On the first day of February, 1850, the travelers began to descend a canyon[11] through which ran a stream. "Grass became plentiful and the cattle began to express pleasure," says John Brier. However, the company was still

starving, a slowly-moving band of skeletons. Signs of game began to appear, but only a few men still had guns or the strength for pursuit. Survival, at least for the time being, was insured by the providential sighting of a mare and two colts. The wanderers ate thankfully, but took care to hoard some of the meat.

Though hope was dawning for the others, Juliet found her burden increasing. To such an extent had James Brier's illness progressed that she had to help him from his bed each morning. His limbs moved erratically. His six-foot body, we are told, weighed but seventy-five pounds. At one time, even his will to live disappeared. He tells us that he sat down under an oak tree "concluding to die." It was Juliet's urging that brought him to the point of making one more effort.

Traveling through prospects which continually improved, the company arrived on the evening of February third at a level, tree-studded glade. The next morning, James insisted that he must start ahead of the rest as he feared that in his weakened condition he could not keep up with his companions. Juliet worried lest he take a wrong direction, but he promised to keep the party in sight. Somewhat later the other members of the Brier party set out, moving perhaps half a mile behind the rest of the units. Juliet tells the story:

> The sun was bright and the grass and flowers seemed like paradise . . . One of the men shot a hawk and another a rabbit and we were preparing to have a feast on them when we heard shooting ahead . . . and we were in great wonder. The Jayhawkers came rushing back with dilated eyes saying they had seen 10,000 cattle and wagon tracks and believed we were near a farm. Oh! what an excitement came over us!

The Brier group came up with the main party and found the men greedily eating meat slashed from newly-killed steers. In her letter for the reunion of 1905, Juliet says:

> My husband was standing amid the crowd with a large piece of meat in his hand. His first words to me were "No more starvation, Jutie! We are here at last!"

It was at this juncture that the owner of the ranch[12] arrived. Amazement speedily became compassion. Before him stood a crew of skeletons. Long, unkempt locks protruded through torn hats. Cheeks, paper-thin, revealed the outlines of the teeth. Rags scarcely hid the bony bodies, and bandages of hide did duty as shoes. The emaciated woman wore a dress slit into ribbons and foot-gear which was no more than hardened leather fragments. The three children were thinly-clad phantoms.

With horrified pity, Juliet was greeted by the rancher's wife and her daughters and "smothered with tears and kisses." The company was invited to set up camp at the foot of the hill on which the ranch house stood. A stream of supplies came from the house—cornmeal, beans, tortillas, milk. A bullock was slaughtered and all were bidden to help themselves.

"We rested at the ranch," says Juliet. "It was like coming back from death into life again." However, the Brier's rest could not have been idleness. Weary though they were, they had of necessity to prepare for the next step. Merely making themselves presentable was no light matter.

Here we washed such clothes as we could do without long enough to dry and washed our faces and hands over and over again to remove the dirt which had been burned and sweated in so completely as not to come off readily.

(William Manly's words fit the circumstances of the Briers as well as they do those of his own group.) The pattern of a whole new life was to be laid out.

The company broke up at the ranch, the Jayhawkers striking toward the coast, and the Briers preparing to go to Los Angeles. Even though most of the men never again saw Juliet, she lived, warmly revered, in their memories.

NOTES

1. The present-day Papoose Dry Lake in south central Nevada.
2. *Jayhawker Papers*, Vol. V. Interleaf pp. 66-67.
3. Travertine Spring.
4. Manly's account of this lecture differs radically.
5. This camp was in the general vicinity of the Stovepipe Wells Hotel.
6. The Panamint Range.
7. Searles Lake.
8. Near present-day Homestead.
9. Today U. S. Highway 6 approximates this trail.
10. In the *Jayhawker Papers*, Vol. I (no page numbers) there is a clipping from the *Kansas City Times*, Feb. 5, 1893: "When the men were too weak to put the pack-saddles on the oxen, it was Mrs. Brier who did the work." No authority for statement is given.
11. Soledad Canyon.
12. The San Francisquito Ranch was situated in the vicinity of Newhall.

(To be continued)

SOUTH AMERICA—
TOWARD BETTER RELATIONS

By WALTER A. PAYNE*

Central America is an agricultural area where industrialism, at best, is in a rudimentary, formative stage of development. Furthermore, it is a region of high potential for growth in population and for new lands to be placed under production, both of which indicate a bright future in terms of the expansion of human and natural resources. Large sectors of the Pacific and Caribbean lowlands, and to a lesser extent the central high mountainous area, represent lands scarcely worked by modern man, or worked at a low rate of efficiency. Related to this are two traditional barriers to the betterment of Central American life for many of its people—the lack of roads to open these areas to man's use and the lack of schools to open their eyes to new horizons of hope and to the values needed to produce a better world for themselves.

There are other traditional barriers to the advancement of these tiny, adjacent states to be sure—dictatorship and army rule, aristocratic and feudal-like social structure, urban-centered power with rural abandonment, and other cultural traits bearing a strong Spanish colonial imprint. The common denominator in these forces is simply this: these are internal phenomena developed under Spain and under Republican governments since independence, and they are phenomena which must be internally solved in the last analysis. Roads and schools have been overlooked by the urban, middle-to upper-class, Hispanic interests, and they, too, are fundamentally internal problems to be solved by Central Americans—by legislators, executive agencies, university leaders, and the elite oligarchy.

What precisely is involved in this suggestion? First of all, transportation and communications in Central America are dangerously underdeveloped and go far to explain the predominantly rural and isolated nature of these lands. If one considers the ratio of highways to national area, the United States has some 1,131 miles of improved, usable roads for each 1,000 square miles of land; the average for Central America is only about 125 miles for the same area, a very weak pulse of development. El Salvador, to be sure, has 475 miles and Guatemala 193, but Honduras has only 21 miles! Railroads might aid in opening up the land, but existent facilities account for only 12.5 miles of track per 1,000 square miles of land area, this being made up of gauge that varies between 3 feet and 3.6 feet in width and is therefore not interconnected.

What about the people? Most of them live in the countryside in isolation or semi-isolation, as the above figures strongly illustrate. More than seven out of ten Central Americans are rural people, and they simply exist outside the stream of national life. They are young in age too, this being due to both a high birth rate and a high death rate. Over two-fifths of these people are

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under fifteen years of age, and life expectancy is not great as evidenced by Guatemala where both men and women can expect to reach an average age of 43-44 years. Economics and education are always closely related. The illiteracy is between 50 and 80 per cent in the entire area, with something like 60 to 65 per cent of the school-age children not in school. The average income per capita has been recently estimated at about $200 per year.

Given this picture of general conditions it can be said that much attention already has been focussed on this group; but, far more aid from outside—both private, semi-private, and government—will be needed and it must be accompanied by a forceful, unequivocable United States policy to bring the underdeveloped political life of these states into line with economic needs and the general goal of meeting the revolution of rising expectations. Castroites and Communists address themselves to these conditions in no uncertain nor wavring terms when they suggest ways to change such statistics and the conditions underlying them. The continuing and long-range policy of this country must work toward creating pressures for change from within.

However, growth in national economics and advancement toward a wider opportunity for more people to enjoy the fruits of social change have got to realize a rapid initial expansion. Roads seem to be a key factor which would prime the pump of national spending at this point. Growth of national product would thereby be substantially aided, too, and country dwellers could better and more frequently partake of urban amenities. Schools go well with roads as people move to establish trade and service centers as well as schools and churches along new highway networks. In Central America, innovations like these would come in rural, not urban, areas in large part. The rural masses are discontented with their *atraso*, their backwardness, but they despair too, for any hope of social justice through cultural change. Since these are substantially young people in age—in their teens, twenties, or at most thirties—such people desperately need hope and time is short.

Let the United States help build hope through tying more aid funds to the building of roads and schools for these young, economically underdeveloped peoples. Such construction is quickly achieved in terms of time, and it would be dramatic evidence of our seizing the initiative. It would steal the thunder from pro-Communist and leftist schemers, and—even if not neatly packaged, pre-planned, and eminently expert and efficient—it would be action toward hope and understanding. The pursuit of ultimates in economic theory in Central America could be a fatal luxury in terms of time and popular feelings there. The failure to act becomes the symbol of the lack of desire to act. Efficient, intelligent planning is probably very scientific in its conception, but the time is late for purely economic considerations. Action is the direction that is indicated.

A principal result of international attention to hemisphere needs in the past few years has been to stir the coals of resentment and heap fuel on the flames of the revolution of rising expectations. A continuous problem has been the

glaring gap between promises made and accomplishments delivered. As long as the problem remains one of concentration of activities in the hands of high officials of both the United States and Latin America—based mainly in a capital city in each country—the very people who are the objective of ultimate change go along quite outside of any serious involvement in the alliance of capital, technical skills, and planning that purports to find its reason for being in the need to change the people and their sad underdevelopment. Meanwhile, official Washington disdains the slowness of Latin American change, and Latin America resents the interference in the ultimate direction of their own affairs.

The problem that arises in aid for foreign areas is simply that of trying to decide whether the American people should encourage projects which have an immediate impact upon foreign areas—like roads and schools and hospitals—or whether it is not more defensible to spend public monies on projects that look to long-range success in development coupled with immediate steps requiring foreign governments to undertake basic reforms in say planning, income tax laws, and land laws. Something of both approaches is likely to develop good results, but interestingly enough people who have a lively contact in the field and basic sympathy for broader social groups in foreign lands often seem to argue for the direct people-to-people approach and immediate impact.

Besides, long-range development seems tied to heavy investment in buildings, laboratories, a bureaucracy, and this inevitably takes place in a capital center. Thus, the immediate impact of such spending appears directly to favor the very elements who are already best off in every sense within these lands. Even worse, such aid inevitably reaches the hands of the very people, interests, and physical areas which already suffer from rapid urbanization as well as from overdevelopment of political controls, army rule in the capital, and a demonstrated lack of interest in changing rural life to any great extent. Hence, aid reinforces ancient evils and shores up social groups and social trends which ought to be disintegrating or at least in healthy modification and change. This is then one aspect of the general problem of new tensions arising out of foreign aid programs in nations to the south.

A closely related subject and a key element in carrying out foreign aid is the American representative overseas who is encharged with actual operations in the field. Any visitor who returns from time to time to Central America will feel disturbing sentiments. It can be something of a shock to look back on the nearly twenty years since 1945 and to recall a long list of Americans who have worked there, and yet to see so little evidence of improved representation. An image persists: the official who "knows it all" but somehow does not convince one that he knows anything at all about the past of the country, or of the value structure of the system. Along with this, he does not know the language nearly well enough, can name names and receptions and parties and "current" thinking circulating at these, but out-

side a fairly narrow fringe of native influence seekers, can not identify the lesser, quieter persons in the society who *merely* work slowly for beneficial national ends—not more narrowly personal ones. Here again, what is missing? The very people who are to be upgraded are scarcely, if ever, involved in this higher echelon of urban, bureaucratic life.

In the continuing fabric of Central American political life, the urban elite and the bureaucratic groups must necessarily be a major concern. It does not seem likely that the United States can do much directly to involve them in new values, nor lessen their own dedication to personal advantages. However, it strikes some people as ridiculous that we do send out Americans who ill represent the values of Americans at home. Is it too naíve to think in terms of "public servants" any longer?

Too many seem to be employed by us simply because of a technical skill or a professional talent, but too few combine cultural and linguistic training with their skill and too few give real evidence of being *simpáticos* in terms of the countries to which they are sent. How can their efforts come to anything productive if they have no basic incentive to make a contribution and have little in the way of language skills to communicate with and to make their enthusiasm clear to nationals in a wider sense than the elite mentioned above? Surely a country as great and resourceful as ours can do a better job of recruiting, selecting, and training people of greater motivation than we have yet achieved. The Peace Corps seems to have found highly motivated volunteers for their increasingly successful program.

In the most recent invasion of Latin America by American bureaucrats bent upon dispensing aid funds and technical information, it is disturbing to see so many who generally can be located in the above-mentioned category. They assume airs not available to them at home, and they wrap themselves in a self-satisfied mold that does little to enlighten them as their residence in these countries grows longer. Also, one is struck by the newness of the faces, but the oldness of the image. A reactionary attitude on the part of the Latin oligarchy can be understood, but how is change to come through a new group of American "moneycrats" with little feeling for the area served and ill-suited to bring change in a solid, productive, continuing manner through massive dosages of metalic medicine?

Since public funds are involved, perhaps the time has come to widen the public served both at home and abroad. Education could be the vehicle, and it could encompass a two-way traffic. United States agencies, foundations, and private community groups might well consider a wider exchange of persons than this country has yet felt called upon to develop. Consider a group of representative Americans who might be unofficial ambassadors for our people. Certain activities come to mind which are eminently American in values and which this country is highly equipped to send abroad. United States students could be sent in high school and college marching bands, operettas, choral groups, athletic teams, and even specially skilled groups like

the Florida State University circus group known to this country through television appearances. It would be hoped that the teams would win some games and lose some, and that all these groups would include outlying towns and other centers as well as the capital cities. Limited numbers of such groups in the past have had wildly enthusiastic reception in Latin America, and the emphasis on talented young people is laid at an age level roughly corresponding to the peoples in other countries.

In a more formal way, North American students could be urged to attend Caribbean schools, mainly at the university level and in summer courses, but in any case in an unofficial capacity to mix with Caribbean students, live with local families, and carry a people-to-people approach to that area. In the main, this would appeal to well-motivated students who would be alert and alive to the educational advantages they seek (language training, archival research, field work in any number of subject fields from cultural anthropology to teaching and work in nutrition). Over past years, students at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels have been among the most warmly received Americans in Isthmian circles—they develop and sustain good relationships.

One might inquire: would such groups exert in their inquisitive and restless outlook any healthy influence on other American bureaucrats in these areas? Would they return home better trained and alive to the great blessing of their own land? Would they return home to enlighten in a responsible way other chair-borne Americans? In any case, lifelong friendships and attitudes of sympathetic understanding find seat in many of our young people who participate in such interchange, and this is practically an unexploited field at the present time. Student exchange does exist and is to be praised, but it is rather a one-sided thing and a one-way street north. It could and should be widened into an avenue for new opportunities in international relationships.

The advantage here is that nothing new needs to be developed for these are skills already amply developed. What is needed is an attitude that says this country is sincere about investing a wider segment of our own resources and talents than in the past. It means we intend to have people-to-people contact and concerns and to invest some of the best of our young people, not just bureaucrats. It stresses private individuals, not officialdom. It would show our people in operation and would seek to implant understanding in Latins through wider contact. It should not seek for them to like us, but rather should seek respect. In the past student groups have achieved this, although it is doubtful that this country is widely respected otherwise.

Investment in the young people of both societies is investment that would derive benefits and returns over long years of future relations. In Central America this investment would sow seeds of accelerated social change in rural young peoples, and pressures would be generated within old societies. Complaints would arise over the restlessness and irritation thus stimulated,

but army-controlled peace from tiny urban centers is what Latins have long termed "the peace of the grave."

Unless these people in the mass are educated in far greater numbers than is now taking place, one wonders to what purpose investment in development is aimed over the years. Also, let the education begin at once, along with roads and other visible signs of hope and good faith for country dwellers. This alone would be a healthy pressure for continuing change. All the United States can do in these countries is to trigger new forces for change, improvement, and awakening of hope and progress—perhaps by use of hitherto unused resources. Above all, a decision must be forthcoming as to what kind of alliance we intend to *achieve*, not merely to *promise*.

Continued from page 169

struggle for survival, the church was at its lowest ebb as the Messenger of the Good News.

No man in any century is able to define God. To Tillich religion means Ultimate Concern. To him God is the Ground of all Being. In this sense, any definition of God which is related peculiarly to any one period in history is inadequate. If God is infinite, undefinable, no century truly reflects the complete story of His action. No matter how objective an historian tries to be, he can never be absolutely objective.

An epic in history reveals itself most thoroughly in art forms. Religious values as seen by men in any period in history reflect themselves in the modes of expression commonly used. In this way religion reflects the culture of a given historical period. Religion also affects culture, shapes it, and gives it direction. Likewise, culture influences, challenges, and affects religion in any given historical period. It is as culture and religion interact that we find man's true response to God's action in history.

FURY AT SAN PASCUAL

By BRIAN MCGINTY*

It was murky and wet on the night of December 5, 1846. Rain fell mercilessly, with a west wind blowing and clouds sweeping low across the oak-studded Mesa Grande. In the rocky valley of San Pascual, thirty miles north of San Diego, General Andres Pico and a band of seventy-five Spanish Californian cavalrymen were camped. Hovered around their isolated fires, they brooded in stolid silence.

Brigadier General Stephen Watts Kearny and 300 dragoons of his "Army of the West," drenched to the skin by the pelting winter rain, were camped in an oak-lined canyon six miles to the east. Their 2,000 mile march from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, just now completed, had been a back-breaking ordeal. And it had been unbearably dull: Not once had Kearny's men fired a shot at an armed enemy.

The day before, the United States Naval Commander in war-torn California, Commodore Robert Field Stockton, had sent twenty-six soldiers and sailors from San Diego to join Kearny's straggling force.[1] Now that the American general had reached California and received reinforcements, he would show his soldiers they had not joined the Army just to march. Huddled with his next-of-command in a makeshift tent, the gaunt soldier smiled. "If the Californians want a fight, we'll give it to them," he said.

Shortly after midnight, a party of scouts went out from the American encampment. Lieutenant Thomas Hammond led the small detail to the summit of a ridge overlooking the San Pascual Valley. Below them, bright orange specks in the blackness of the night, were the fires of the Californian camp.

Lieutenant Hammond halted and sent two men ahead. Picking their way down the rocky slope, the men silently crossed the valley floor and approached the edge of the camp.

A dog caught their scent and yelped. From the midnight darkness a booming voice called: "Who goes there!"

A moment of silence was followed by the distant sound of pounding hooves, and the muffled whisper of heavy bodies breaking through rain-soaked brush, as Kearny's scouts beat a hasty retreat. Back in camp, the General was informed of their encounter. Almost immediately, he issued orders to break camp,[2] and, in the early morning mists, the weary dragoons made ready their attack.

The rain had stopped, and an icy north wind blew down from the snow-capped Cuyamacas. The dragoons grumbled openly. So cold were their hands that they could scarcely hold the reins, and their horses, tired and poorly fed, plodded reluctantly.

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On the crest of the hill above San Pascual, the dreary contingent paused. Kearny surveyed the valley floor, a grey carpet of morning velvet spread out before him. He breathed deeply, then barked a curt order to "Move!"

A column of two's was formed, and the men spilled over the rim of the valley. Moving slowly at first, the horses picked up speed as the rocky slopes steepened before their weary legs. Captain Abraham Johnston, West Point trained and eager for action, jostled atop his steed at the head of the column. The Californian tents were almost visible now, ghostly shrouds standing quiet in the cold morning mist.

With each forward lurch of his mount, Johnston grew more impatient, trying hard to contain his bursting eagerness. At last, he could wait no longer. His head held high, he drew his saber and shouted "Charge!"[3] Even before the word left his quivering lips, the Captain realized his tragic mistake. Three-quarters of the soldiers were still on top of the hill or feeling their way down the rocky slope.

Now, the Californians were vaulting into their saddles and racing to meet the oncoming Yankees. In their hands were a few antiquated muskets and the famous Californian lances, hand-forged, brightly plumed, and razor sharp.[4] Riding full tilt into the first volley of fire, Captain Johnston fell with a heavy musket ball lodged in his brain.[5]

Captain Benjamin Moore called for a second charge to pursue the Californians. As the dragoons rushed forward, General Andres Pico and his lancers feigned retreat, keeping just beyond the reach of the pursuing dragoons. The U. S. mounts were unresponsive, and when the American force was fully extended, Pico wheeled his column back and hurled it into the thin opposing line.

The field was alive with horsemen moving ghost-like through the half-light of dawn. The Californians, dextrously wielding their knife-sharp lances, inflicted painful casualties on the enemy. Then they raced across the flat of the valley, reforming in the shelter of a projecting hill.

The struggling line of dragoons soon swept past the point, and again the Californians charged with lances leveled. Rain had rendered most of the dragoons' guns useless, and, before the others could be fired, the angry lancers were on them. Carbines used as clubs were poor matches for dextrous, razor-like lances.

One of the American howitzers had been captured and put out of action, and in the U. S. battery a bulky cannon was hurriedly readied for use.

"Where's the match?" someone shouted.

"There isn't any!"

"Where's the flint?"

"*It's out!*"[6]

Lieutenant W. H. Warner tried to fire the gun with his pistol, but had no luck. Another officer arrived and, using a flint and cotton wick, finally succeeded in firing the piece. The field was engulfed in a blinding burst of fire

and smoke. Faced with cannon fire, for which their lances were an unequal match, the Californians retreated.

The dragoons gathered on the hillside above the valley floor, counting their casualties and burying their dead. Though they had forced a California retreat, eighteen of their own men had been killed, an equal number were wounded, and one man was missing.[7] General Kearny himself had been hit twice.

It was a stupid, reckless war—this military campaign for the conquest of California. The 15,000 or so Spanish and Mexican residents of this vast territory extending from the Pacific shore to the deserts of the Great Salt Lake were no match for the young, bursting forces of the American Republic. And, indeed, they had no great love for the corrupt and remote central government of Mexico City. They called themselves *Californios*, not *Mexicanos*. Many of their leaders freely admitted that California would benefit from a substitution of the Stars and Stripes for the Mexican national banner. But the *Gringos* had not waited for the peaceful acquisition of the territory. They had captured the capital city, Monterey, by surrounding the government house and demanding its surrender, and had sent armed troops into the countryside. And Californian blood had been shed.

There was no real doubt in anyone's mind who would win this war for the conquest of California. But the fierce Latin pride of the Californians had been aroused, and, even if they lost the war, they vowed they would win a battle.

That battle, they believed, would be the battle of San Pascual.

At dawn of the following morning, Kearny's dragoons prepared to depart for San Diego. Andres Pico and his lancers had surely learned their lesson, and must by now be as far away as their tired horses could take them in a night. Carrying their wounded on crude stretchers, the Americans moved west along the valley.

As they proceeded, Kearny's sentries caught sight of mounted horsemen stealthily picking their way along the rocky ridge overlooking San Pascual. About five miles from the battleground of the previous day, Kearny called his men to a halt. Before him, at a point where the valley narrowed, the determined Pico and his lancers were massing to prevent his passage.

The dragoons swerved sharply and rode into the hills.

Pico's men moved up the other side of the ridge, appearing simultaneously from the southwest and the southeast. Immediately, Kearny dispatched messengers for San Diego to ask for further reinforcements from Commodore Stockton.[8] He then rode forward to a low hill, where he could better resist the expected assault.

Pico did not call for an immediate charge. Instead, he and his soldiers made camp at a ranch house at the foot of the hill. An hour passed, and then two. It became clear that Pico's strategy was to play a waiting game.

Night fell, and by dawn of the next morning no sign of relief had appeared

from San Diego. On the hilltop, wounded American soldiers died and were buried in rocky graves. The third day came, and still there were no reinforcements. The Californians offered to exchange prisoners, and the dragoons agreed. They sent down one Californian and received three of their own men. One was a member of the group Kearny had sent to San Diego. Commodore Stockton, the returned prisoner revealed, could not spare any men.

The "Army of the West" was desperate now. Kearny issued an order:

> All public property now in the camp which we have not the means of transporting to San Diego, will at once be destroyed, this of course becomes necessary in order to prevent such property from falling into the hands of the enemy by whom we are now surrounded.
>
> By order of Brigadier-General S. W. Kearny[9]

One of the scouts in Kearny's band offered to try once again to get through to San Diego and present a last urgent plea to Stockton. The General gave his permission. The scout was Kit Carson.

The Californians kept watch at the bottom of the hill, as two more days passed without relief. Slowly, Kearny lost his last slim hope that Carson had somehow made it through. On the night of December 10, the General decided that his only chance for survival was to attempt an escape from the hill. He issued a command to march the next morning.

Late that night his plans were suddenly changed.

A weary American sentry was aroused from his post by the rumble of a large group of marching men.

"Who goes there?" he shouted into the darkness. The dragoons, awakened, waited in tense silence for the answer.

Finally it came.

"Americans!"

Kit Carson's hazardous gamble paid off, as 215 sailors and marines marched into camp. That night, as the jubilant men sat around their fires, a lone musket cracked in the darkness and a ball whistled through the camp. The Californians' last shot at the Yankee dragoons was a brave gesture at defiance. But no one was hit, and, by the following morning, the marauding lancers were gone. The next day, Kearny, with his liberators and tattered dragoons, limped into San Diego.

Recovering from his wounds in the sleepy sea-coast town, General Kearny immediately set his pen to paper to prepare a report of the encounter for the War Department in Washington. Boldly, he wrote: "The victory here gained over more than double our force may assist in forming the wreath of our national glory."[10] That Kearny's account of the significance of the battle was entirely objective is, however, open to at least a little doubt. The prominent Judge Benjamin Hayes of San Diego, who examined witnesses and studied the battle carefully, disagreed with the General's glowing estimates of the dragoons' fighting prowess. "I am satisfied," he said, "that it will require considerable attention and labor to ascertain all the truth of this lamentable affairs."[11]

The dragoons' casualties had been heavy. Indeed, the fighting at San Pascual marked the United States' heaviest battle loss since the War of 1812.[12] Between 18 and 19 men had been killed, and an equal number were wounded. Only one Californian was killed.[13] Despite the self-serving protestations of Kearny, it was clear that Andres Pico and his lancers had scored well.

The event was enshrined in history books as the "Battle of San Pascual." For those who had taken part, it was remembered as a bitter trial of blood, tears and bravery. Within half a year, the Californians, at last vanquished, sued for peace, and Andres Pico joined with John C. Frémont in setting his name to the Treaty of Cahuenga. As everyone knew they must, the Californians had lost the war, and California belonged to the *Gringos*. But the brave defenders of a defenseless homeland were not ashamed, even in defeat. Though they had lost the war, they had won the battle in the misty valley of San Pascual.

NOTES

1. Arthur Woodward, "Lances at San Pascual," *California Historical Quarterly*, XXVI, p. 24.
2. H. H. Bancroft, *History of California*, V, p. 343.
3. Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
4. William Heath Davis, *75 Years in California* (S. F., 1929), p. 280, reports that when the Californians first saw the weary and haggard dragoons appear on the field, they cried: "*Aqui vamos hacer matanza.*" ("Here we are going to have a slaughter.")
5. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, p. 344.
6. Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
7. One of the dragoons, Lt. Archibald Gillespie, later gave this account of American casualties: "Out of forty-five men engaged, there were nineteen killed – two Captains, one First Lieutenant, sixteen non-commissioned officers and privates, and the twentieth died the next day. There were eighteen wounded – amongst them General Kearny. . . ." San Francisco *Alta California*, Nov. 14, 1868; it is generally agreed that only one Californian, Francisco Dorio Lara, was killed; Janssens Docs., MS, Bancroft Library, pp. 45-46; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, p. 347; Woodward, *op cit.*, p. 41. General Kearny's assertion that many Californians were killed was, in Bancroft's estimate, a deliberate misrepresentation.
8. Letter from H. S. Turner to Robert Field Stockton, Dec. 6, 1846; Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
9. John S. Griffin, "Documents," MS, Bancroft Library.
10. Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
11. Judge Benjamin Hayes, *Notebooks*, MS, Bancroft Library.
12. Felix Riesenberg, Jr., *The Golden Road* (N. Y., 1962), p. 100.
13. See Note 7.

JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE FROM BALTIMORE TO SAN FRANCISCO

By ROBERT GORDON

1849

Edited and Annotated by

REGINALD R. STUART, and GRACE D. STUART

PART VI

Robert Gordon, born in County Cavan, Ireland,[1] on January 1, 1825, an immigrant to America in 1847, and to California in 1849, continued as a merchant in Auburn, California, until January 1877. During the years, he bought two lots near the intersection of Lincoln and Commercial.[2] On one of these stood a brick store building with living quarters above, and nearby on the other was an old barn. This latter lot was known as "Gordon's Garden."

Gordon maintained a General Merchandise Store, which according to the final auction sale, included a fine assortment of groceries and hardware, such as tea, coffee, canned fruit, spices, cutlery, picks, shovels, butts, nails, tools, glassware, crockery, whiskey, cigars, and tobacco.[3]

About noon on January 8, 1877, Gordon left the store, walked across the street to the "Garden" and shot himself. For 86 years, the belief has been held quite generally—even in his own family—that he committed suicide. Because there appeared to be certain discrepancies in the account, the present editors of his Journal have examined carefully the early records of Auburn.

At the inquest called by Coroner Swett on January 10, 1877, the following facts were established: His wife, Mrs. Mary Gordon, found him lying on the ground in the garden. She called neighbors and finally, after some delay when they attempted to move him, it was discovered that he had been shot and was bleeding profusely. In answer to the question, "How did it happen?" he replied, "I was fixing my pistol and accidentally shot myself." The wound was in his body. Dr. T. M. Todd was summoned and Gordon was placed on a mattress for removal to the house. He remained conscious and continued to live for several hours, but eventually bled to death. Six witnesses, including his wife, Mary Gordon, Mrs. Susan McClellan, Wm. Stone, John M. White, Adam Holden, and Thos. Cain, testified to hearing Gordon say that it was accidental. The Coroner's jury returned a verdict that the deceased had come to his death by accidentally shooting himself.[4] Members of the jury were: B. D. Dunnam, Foreman; W. B. McGuire, G. B. Macomde, J. A. Filcher, V. V. Mann, and C. L. Simons.

B. D. Dunnam was appointed Administrator of the Estate. On April 2, 1877 at 10:00 A.M., an auction sale commenced at the store and continued for 7 days. The administrator acted as auctioneer. The net sales amounted to $2,028.60. This amount together with a $1000 life insurance policy, numer-

ous uncollectible notes and accounts, several mining claims, the store building, and vacant lot, constituted his assets. Unsecured creditors received 20.6 cents on the dollar. The final report of the Administrator was filed December 8, 1877.[5]

"Robert Gordon was known far and near and no man, woman, or child knew him but to respect him. . . . Scarcely a circumstance in our recollection has precipitated such a gloomy shadow over the community. . . . Women and children shed tears and men wore countenances of sorrow, indicating, unmistakably the very high esteem in which the deceased was held."[6]

Why, then, has the myth persisted that Gordon committed suicide?

First, it was generally known that he was badly in debt. He was generous to a fault. No one ever asked for help that he did not respond. This, probably, was the cause of most of his financial difficulty. However, it should be remembered that California was still in the grip of the Great Depression of the middle 1870's. It was not an uncommon situation to be badly in debt.

The second reason for the persistence of the suicide rumor grew out of the psychology of futility which for the time permeated the very foundation of society. Self-destruction seemed to be "a way out" and the "fashion" of the day. Newspapers were crowded with suicide notices and they embraced all segments of society from the great San Francisco banker to the lowliest alcoholic on Barbary Coast.

A third reason may have been the $1,000 life insurance policy. "What better way than by life insurance to get even with your creditors and help your family at the same time?" The fallacy here was that Gordon's policy was made payable to his estate and hence was available to his creditors rather than to his family.

A fourth reason for the persistence of the belief may have grown out of questions which the "evidence" raised: "Why, but to kill himself, did Gordon take his gun as he walked across the street on January 8?" Here, too, there was a reasonable answer. Ordinarily, Gordon did not carry a gun. The pistol was kept in the store as a precaution. Witnesses swore that Gordon had been in the habit of periodically "shooting off the pistol" in the garden to keep his charge activated. This was a common custom of the times. What is more reasonable than this explanation? The gun does not "fire." Gordon attempts to adjust cap or charge, the powder ignites, and he is fatally injured.

A final "proof" for those pessimistically inclined was a document which "showed up" among Gordon's papers. It was a "Declaration of Homestead,"[7] signed the very day of his death, January 8, 1877. (See page 192.)

"That settles it," insisted the rumor mongers. "It was like this: Gordon was being pressed by his creditors. At last he was up against a blank wall. 'This paper may give some relief to my family.' Then he killed himself."

Seemingly, the presumption was held that this "Declaration" was signed during the morning of January 8, 1877, *before* the shooting. The present editors believe that external evidence on the instrument, itself, is conclusive

Auburn August 22nd 1876

Mr. A. J. Damon
Emigrant Gap.

Friend Damon

Yours to hand, and contents noted, I have taken that drink, and would have been glad to have had you to take one with me, it must be very tough if through them woods to not have a little whiskey once in awhile when a fellow is overheated, and tired. I have been to the Post Office and cannot find anything for either you or Smith. I guess the girls know your address better than to send letters for either of you to this place now.

I believe I never gave you a statement showing how we stand in accounts. but I'll do so now, so you will know how much I am using of your money. I received a certificate for $392.05 sent it by Express for Collection Paid $1.50 Express charges, they paid one third or $130.68 of the amt. in Silver, on which I lost a discount of $6.53. then I Paid to Dallman $16. To Ed Hudson for Hauling $84.50 and to Ed Hudson for Gord. 8.94. and to Robert Gordon on Sum of Damon account $79.23 leaving in Gordons hands the Sum of $214.35 if Everything be correct. And that sum of your good friend Gordon has spent like a Gentleman, and hopes you may not call for it until you come down in the winter, and then he'll pay interest on the accommodation. I dont know, any news to tell you of it seems that all your kind of lively fellows have become rather scarce in these parts, and it would seem as though the girls have gone with them, for all are absent from here. My brother Thomas is still in Truckee, and may stay there all winter. Let a fellow hear from you once in awhile, take a drink to my health when you get a chance, and I'll do the same to you.

With best wishes

Yours

Robert Gordon

Know all Men by these Presents:

THAT We Robert Gordon and Mary Gordon of the County of Placer State of California do hereby certify and declare that we are — married, and that we — do now, at the time of making this declaration, reside with our — family on the tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the County of Placer State of California bounded and described as follows, to wit:

Lot No Four (4) in Block No Eight (8) and Lot No Seven (7) in Block No Three (3) of the town of Meadows in said Placer County California. as the said lots are marked and designated on the Official Plat of said town now on file in the Office of the Recorder of said Placer County.

That the actual cash value of the same is $ Four Thousand Dollars and that it is our intention to use and claim the said tract of land and premises, together with the dwelling house thereon, and its appurtenances, as a Homestead and do hereby select and claim the same as a Homestead.

In Witness Whereof, We have hereunto set our hands and seal this Eighth day of January one thousand eight hundred and seventy Seven

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in the Presence of

Robert Gordon SEAL.

Mary Gordon. SEAL.

State of California, } ss
County of Placer. }

On this 8th day of January A. D. 1877, before me, J. T. Ashley, County Recorder in and for Placer County, California, personally appeared Robert Gordon and Mary Gordon his wife, known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the within instrument, and acknowledged to me that they executed the same. And the said Mary Gordon known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument described as a married woman, and upon an examination without the hearing of her husband, I made her acquainted with the contents of said instrument, and thereupon she acknowledged to me that she executed the same and that she does not wish to retract such execution.

Witness my hand and Official Seal.

J. T. Ashley
Recorder Placer County.

By F. D. Adams Deputy.

that this is erroneous. The document was signed by Gordon, at the instigation of well-meaning friends, *after* he was shot. Compare the signatures which appear on the two facsimiles which are submitted. One is in Gordon's regular handwriting. (Page 193.) The other (Page 192) is a wobbly caricature, undoubtedly executed as the labored effort of a person in great pain and under the influence of morphine.[8] It was probably printed while he lay on his back at the point of death. Perhaps, even his hand was guided by a deeply concerned friend. We believe Gordon, himself, had no comprehension of its significance.

Generally speaking, the pioneer storekeeper was more than a vendor of goods. He was a counsellor and confidant—a man of honor and integrity. Not infrequently, he was the miner's banker and funds placed in his hands were held inviolable. Gordon was no exception. (See letter, page 193.) Does it sound like a man who would tie up his personal funds through a technicality to keep from paying an honest debt? Gordon was not that kind of man. To him a Declaration of Homestead was obnoxious and dishonorable. He would never countenance such procedure. We have ruled out the possibility of a forgery because we feel sure the county officials—who were his close friends—were fully cognizant of all the facts. The signature is genuine, but executed under conditions and at a time when Gordon was not accountable for his acts.

Many years have passed since that cold January day in Auburn, California. While each event ought to be judged within its own contemporary scenery, it does appear from this distance that Judge J. Ives Fitch's decision to allow the widow and the three minor children a total of $925.00[9] for temporary maintenance, together with the approval of the Declaration of Homestead, was reasonable and equitable. Eventually, on July 13, 1880,[10] after Mrs. Mary Gordon had moved to San Francisco, she sold the "Garden" to J. M. Norton of Auburn for $500.00 and on May 1, 1881,[11] she sold the store building to S. M. Stevens for $3,500.00.

Thus we come to the closing paragraph. It is a plea to re-evaluate the acts and motives of the pioneer, Robert Gordon. On the morning of January 10, 1877, ". . . Streets near his residence were jammed with people and carriages . . . The procession commenced its slow march toward the old Auburn burying ground . . ."[12] And so he returned to the Mother Lode. Intelligent, sympathetic, generous—Robert Gordon was not only one of Auburn's earliest settlers, but he was, as well, one of its most beloved citizens.

NOTES

1. Obituary notice in *Placer Herald*, January 13, 1877. (Courtesy of Mrs. Joan A. Grenier, Proprietor of the *Herald*, and A. J. Finocchio, Assistant-Cashier, Bank of America.)
2. These lots were Lot 4, Block 8, and Lot 7, Block 3, plat of the Town of Auburn. Present street alignment has altered lot and block formation.
3. Probate File No. 439. Courtesy Placer County Clerk, Maurine I. Dobbas, Auburn.
4. Report of Coroner's Jury, File No. 439: "... by the accidental explosion of a pistol while handling it."
5. File No. 439, County Clerk's office.
6. *Placer County Herald*, January 13. 1877.
7. File No. 439 as above.
8. See bill for morphine procured for Gordon while he lay wounded.
9. Administrator's Report, File 439.
10. Deed Records, Book HH., p. 193. (Courtesy of Placer County Recorder C. Goodpastor and Mrs. Eleanor Rock, assistant.)
11. Deed Records, Book II, p. 22.
12. *Placer County Herald*, January 13, 1877.

CHARLES LEWIS CAMP

By FRANCIS P. FARQUHAR

Charlie Camp belongs to that remarkable group of *bicephaloids* found upon the periphery of the Bay of San Francisco. He is of the sub-species *Paleontologica-Historicus,* distinguished by dissertations about old bones and by the writing of history. Two examples taken from a long bibliography illustrate this dualism—"Triassic Dicynodont Reptiles" and a revision of Henry R. Wagner's "The Plains and the Rockies." The former we may pass over for the present, except to say that it is only one of many technical studies contributed by Dr. Camp toward the elucidation of the remote past. At the moment we are concerned with the other phase of the Campian bicephaloid character, that of Historian. First, however, let us look into the provenance of our subject.

Charles Lewis Camp was born at Jamestown, North Dakota, March 12, 1893, in the midst of a blizzard. His father was U.S. District Attorney, a man of stature in the legal profession. More than that, he foreshadowed his son in having a second field of specialized knowledge. He had studied geology under the great Professor Chamberlain at Wisconsin and he conveyed to his son Charles an interest in the formation of the Earth and its earliest forms of life. The family moved from Dakota to Southern California after a while and there Charlie attended school at Throop Polytechnic Institute and Pasadena High School. During his boyhood days he became entranced with the remains of prehistoric animals discovered at Rancho La Brea, near his home. He did special work there for the Los Angeles High School in the summer of 1910. Meanwhile he participated in field explorations in the southern part of the state and later in Yosemite Valley. From Pasadena, Camp went to the University of California at Berkeley, where he received his A.B. degree in 1915. From there he went to Columbia University and in 1916 received the degree of M.A. while serving as Assistant Instructor in Zoology and at the same time a Research Assistant at the American Museum of Natural History.

Camp's studies and professional work were interrupted by the War. He attended the U.S. Army School at Plattsburg in the summer of 1917 and on being commissioned Second Lieutenant, Field Artillery, he went immediately overseas in the American Expeditionary Forces, advancing soon to First Lieutenant. At the close of the War he remained for a time in the Army of Occupation.

On his return he resumed his studies and teaching at Columbia, and it was at this time that he became interested in Western American History. He used to wander into antiquarian bookstores—Edward Eberstadt's, Lathrop Harper's, Charles Everett's, and others—where he would pick up odd books and pamphlets for inconsiderable sums and take them home to read at night as a respite from works in the field of his studies. (Times have changed, and such things are now sold at auction for astonishing figures and are locked behind glass doors on the rare-book shelves of great libraries.) In the midst

of these pursuits he met a man who was to have a great influence upon his life—Henry Raup Wagner. It was a combination of Edward Eberstadt (then at the old store on 42nd Street) and a manuscript of Kit Carson's dictation that brought them together. Mr. Wagner had recently revived the old California Historical Society in San Francisco and he suggested that Camp edit the Carson manuscript for the new *Quarterly*. This he agreed to do and it appeared in the second number of the first volume, October 1922.

Camp's dissertation, "Classification of the Lizards," was published in the *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* in 1923 and in the same year he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Columbia. Meanwhile he was back in California with an appointment as Research Associate, Museum of Paleontology, at the University of California, Berkeley, where he remained for the rest of his professional career, advancing before his retirement in 1960 to Professor of Paleontology and head of the Department as well as Director of the Museum. The forty years of his connection with the University of California have been distinguished by the products of his world-wide field work in search of skeletal remains from the Triassic period. In China, in South America, as well as in North America he found the same answer to his question—Were the southern continents so closely connected in that period that genera could migrate from one to another? His answer—No. His conclusion was that throughout the Triassic period distinct genera arose in each continent. This was by no means his sole contribution to the science of Paleontology. A glance at his bibliography discloses such diverse subjects as "A study of the phytosaurs with description of new material from Western North America" (1930); "Large carnivorous dinosaur from Sze-Chuan, China" (1934); "A new type of small bipedal dinosaur from the Navajo sandstone of Arizona" (1936); "Skeletal and muscular differences in the hind limbs of *Lepus*, *Sylvilagus*, and *Ochotona*" (1937); "The digital ligaments of the horse" (1942); and more recently "A guide to the continental Triassic of northern Arizona" (1947); "Orinda—three million years ago" (1948); "Journey through North-Western Australia and Central Australia in search of fossil vertebrates" (1963); also a rather macabre speculation about our future, "How shall we mount our skeletons?" (1942); and should we include "The resurrection of E Clampus Vitus" (1938), or does that belong to another category?

At all events the last-mentioned item leads us to another aspect of Charlie Camp's life—the personal, sociable, and family life by which he is best known to his many friends. The mock-seriousness of the "Clampers," the ardent-geniality of the card sharps of the Faculty Club at Berkeley have been outlets for his gregarious instincts. All these varied activities have not interfered with his family life; rather, the family has participated in them. In 1924 he was married to Jessie Margaret Pratt—the incomparable Jessie—who has accompanied him on his far-flung field trips, keeping a watchful eye out for lively reptiles as well as dead dinosaurs. There have been no signs of neglect by

either parent in raising to maturity four children: Charles (Chuck), Nancy, Patsy, and Roderick.

For a long time the Camps lived in Berkeley, but in recent years they have dwelt just over the hills in Orinda. Charles has been an active participant in a number of societies. He is a member, and in some cases a fellow, of the following: California Academy of Sciences, New York Academy of Sciences, Geological Society of America, Paleontological Society, American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology, Cooper Ornithological Club, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science; and in the field of history: the California Historical Society, the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Society.

Two of Camp's scientific activities of special importance are still continuing, notwithstanding his alleged retirement: a fossil project in Nevada, and a world-wide bibliography of fossil vertebrates. The latter, begun in 1928, is being published by the Geological Society of America. The other project began when, in 1953, he went to Central Nevada to look at some ichthyosaur deposits discovered by Professor Simeon Muller, of Stanford University. "The bones lay in such profusion," says Camp, "that we decided to ask the State to establish a Park so that visitors could see how fossils 200 million years old looked as they lay in place in the rocks. I spent several seasons, from 1954 to 1958 and again recently, in an effort to bring the Park into a form acceptable to the State and to the public."

Camp's close association with Henry R. Wagner and with the California Historical Society, begun in 1922, produced over the succeeding years results comparable, both in volume and in permanent value, to his scientific work. Wagner had a way of drawing about him younger men who showed talents in their own special fields and inspiring them with his own ideals of historical research, which might be summarized as "Pay no attention to what others have said, find out for yourself." To this Camp responded with enthusiasm. Into the field of human history he brought the same zeal for searching out facts by "digging" that he displayed in the field of pre-history. The results have been monumental, first his contributions to the *California Historical Society Quarterly*, then certain ably edited books that have become essential to every student of Western American History. Among the former, closely following his "Kit Carson in California," are "The Chronicles of George C. Yount," "The Journal of Benjamin Dore," and "James Clyman, his diaries and reminiscences," the last published separately in 1928, with additions, and again with more additions, "a definitive edition," in 1960. From 1923 to 1935 he was a Director of the Society and a member of its Publications Committee, part of the time Chairman. During this period he wrote many scholarly book-reviews for the *Quarterly* as well as a check-list of Western History publications.

Foremost of Dr. Camp's works in value to historians is "The Plains and the Rockies," cited throughout western historical writings today as "Wag-

ner-Camp." First published by Henry R. Wagner in 1920 (corrected in 1921), it needed to be overhauled and extended to provide for new material that had been brought to light. "Fortunately," wrote Mr. Wagner in 1935, "just the right man to edit it is at hand. Mr. Charles L. Camp has agreed to undertake the task, make the corrections and additions and see the book through the press. This is a surprising stroke of fortune as no one of my friends is so well fitted to edit this book as Mr. Camp, versed as he is, not only in the history of the epoch covered, but well acquainted with many of the books described." Camp's visits to the bookstores in New York had indeed paid off. He had continued to keep in touch with these dealers, who could be so helpful in bibliographical work of this character. Moreover, he had become well acquainted as an *aficionado* with many of the top collectors, including Thomas W. Streeter, Everett D. Graff, Herbert M. Evans. He was also known to the heads of the great libraries such as the Missouri Historical Society, the Kansas Historical Society, the Newberry, and of course the Bancroft and the Huntington. In an editor's note, Camp wrote: "The pleasure of editing this edition of Wagner's *Plains and the Rockies* has been greatly enhanced by generous cooperation from persons interested in the work. Mr. Wagner himself has furnished comments on many of the new items and has joined me in going over the manuscript." The new edition, of 600 copies, was published in 1937 by the Grabhorn Press, and as might be expected it is a beautifully printed book, delightful to handle. Yet, in fifteen years, such was the demand, still another edition was required, and Camp again undertook the work. Over a hundred new entries were added. This *Third Edition,* although even more valuable to historians than its predecessors, is, through no fault of the editors, mechanically greatly inferior to the Grabhorn edition and is rather distressing to handle. Undoubtedly there will some day be a demand for a *Fourth Edition,* and the then venerable Doctor Camp will be able to combine the virtues of both preceding ones. But it is doubtful if he or anyone else will be able to add very much to the text of this remarkable compendium of bibliographical knowledge.

Before we depart from this happy association of Camp and Wagner a pleasant episode remains to be recorded. On September 27, 1947, Camp, with four other friends of Mr. Wagner, presented to him at a dinner in Los Angeles in honor of his Eighty-Fifth Birthday a volume, printed by the Grabhorns, entitled "Essays for Henry R. Wagner." Camp's contribution was "The D. T. P. Letters," in which the writer of the letters was identified as Daniel T. Potts, a notable figure in the exploration of the West. The other contributors were Francis P. Farquhar, George L. Harding, Dorothy H. Huggins, and Carl I. Wheat. Mr. Wagner wrote an appreciative reply in which he praised Camp's editing of "James Clyman, American Frontiersman, 1792-1881."

Charles Camp has given us an epitome of his life's work in a remarkable volume called "Earth Song," in which he combines in a highly imaginative

way the erudition of the Paleontologist and the perspective of the Historian. And most unexpectedly we find ourselves reading poetry. Published in 1952 by the University of California Press, but sadly now out of print, it should be better known. Here, both in text and in illustration, we find out what the beasts of the Paleontologist's ancient horizon looked like, and by tables and charts we find out what a whale of a long time ago Charlie's friends the phytosaurs and the dinosaurs disported themselves upon the lands and waters of our favored State. Don't misunderstand me—the book is a serious one and a good one. And the poetry is a fitting complement to the scientific, the bibliographical, and the historical projections of Charles Lewis Camp, Ph.D.

PRELUDE

California! Land thrice-born, cradled between the desert and the sea, hear the Earth Song! Song of the pulsing rocks—born of the heated earth, born from beneath the sea, and born in storms and floods upon the land.

Hear the Earth Song, O California! Song of the waves, swept from their ancient shores to give you birth. Song of the land delivered from the troughs of the sea by the labor of the trembling earth. Song of the mountains, rising in majesty about your sunlit strand, in green and tawny dress and ermine robes of snow.

Child of rocks and waves, this song is sung for you.

EDITORIAL

Part II of the Jedediah Smith Bibliography has been delayed. It will appear in the February issue of the *Pacific Historian.*

THE RENDEZVOUS

The fall Rendezvous of the Jedediah Smith Society was held at the palatial home of Mr. and Mrs. Waddell F. Smith in San Rafael on Saturday, October 5, 1963. The Smiths call their home the "Pony Express Retreat," and there in the midst of rare paintings, unique and costly exhibits, commanding and varied views from the oak-covered terraces of the Bay Area yachting and shipping, was gathered the annual meeting of Jedediah Smith fans.

Almost everyone was in costume representing a wide range of pioneer life. There were vaqueros (our hosts furnished the horse and saddle), rancheros, senoritas, trappers, bandits, and not a few "schoolmarms," and miners. One scout brought the papoose whom he had saved in an Indian raid. It was the concensus of opinion that he did very well, both as a protector and as a narrator of his experiences.

Despite a light rain which only enhanced the warmth and comfort of the spacious surroundings, the occasion proved typical of the friendly group which yearly meets for a revival of this oldest social event of the Mountain Men.

WANTED!

A complete paid-up membership roll of the Jedediah Smith Society!

By the way, have *YOU* paid your dues for 1963? And the year before that? Just *when* did you pay? Your cancelled check will tell.

Twenty-four new members have been added to the Roster since February. We need more. Will *YOU* help to get them?

Each year our member from Anderson with her membership dues sends a *Donation* of equal amount for postage. Each year it comes as a surprise and is greatly appreciated. What will *YOU* do?

THE MISSIONS TOUR

Almost every year we meet people who did not learn in time about the Missions Tour. For sixteen years the University of the Pacific has piloted a busload of enthusiastic visitors to all of the 21 missions of Spanish-Californian days. The accepted time is during the week prior to Easter. This year the dates are March 21-29, 1964. A note or 'phone call to Elliot J. Taylor, Director of Tours, University of the Pacific, Stockton 4, California, will bring full particulars re this happy experience.

THE JEDEDIAH SMITH SOCIETY

Honorary Life Members

Leland D. Case Charles M. Goethe

New Members

George Chalfant, Ukiah
Mrs. William Clark, Pleasanton
Ernest C. Howard, Lodi
Evelyn B. Moller, Pleasanton
Miss Beatrice Peregoy, Lodi
Fred A. Rosenstock, Denver, Colorado
Aileen Notmeyer Ross, San Francisco
Dorothy R. Usinger, San Francisco

In Memoriam

Wert E. Moore, Stockton

LIFE MEMBERS

The question has been asked: Why Honorary Life Members? A few members have been singled out because of their lasting contributions to the memory of Jedediah Strong Smith:

CHARLES L. CAMP. Editor, *James Clyman, Frontiersman.* First authentic picture of Jedediah Smith's early years in the Rocky Mountains.

LELAND D. CASE. Honored instigant of the Jedediah Smith Society and donor of much Smithiana to the Society.

LAURA GARDIN FRASER. Artist and sculptress, who immortalized Jedediah Smith in bronze.

CHARLES M. GOETHE. Idealist and long-time admirer of the Great Explorer. Donor of the Jedediah Smith Memorial Grove of giant redwoods.

DALE LOWELL MORGAN. Author, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West.* Foremost living authority of Smith's activities.

CARL IRVING WHEAT. Compiler and co-author with Dale Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and His Maps of the American West.*

Designed and Printed by Lawton Kennedy

THE HISTORY CALENDAR

November 17, 1963
Twenty-fifth Lynnewood Conference
"Hiroshima—Eighteen Years Later"
Dr. and Mrs. David K. Bruner

December 2-4, 1963
Colliver Lectures—University of the Pacific
"The Church and Urban Society"
Dr. Martin Marty

December 30, 1963 - March 26, 1964
Raymond College—Winter Term
University of the Pacific

January 19, 1964
Twenty-sixth Lynnewood Conference
Dr. Melvin Drake, *et al*

February 3, 1964
Classes Begin—Spring Semester
University of the Pacific and Covell College

February 7-8, 1964
Southern California History Symposium
Hacienda Motel—Bakersfield

March 1 - April 15, 1964
Exposition of Pre-Columbian Art
Pioneer Museum and Haggin Galleries
Stockton

March 21-29, 1964
Seventeenth Annual California Missions Tour

April 3-4, 1964
Seventeenth Annual
California History Foundation Institute
University of the Pacific

April 4, 1964
Jedediah Smith Society Breakfast
University of the Pacific

June 18-19-20, 1964
Tenth Annual Meeting
Conference of California Historical Societies
Hotel U. S. Grant—San Diego